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HISTORY OF THE WORKING CLASSES IN FRANCE: MEDIÆVAL PERIOD.

LEVASSEUR's monumental work¹ has already been the subject of one review in this JOURNAL, at least as far as the Roman period is concerned. But inasmuch as only a fifth of the volume is occupied with Roman labor, it seems still more important to call attention to the remainder, which is devoted to the far more complex, and in certain matters vastly more difficult, period of the Middle Ages. Historical literature does not often possess a work such as M. Levasseur's. The subject, whether treated from the point of view of imperial or feudal legislation, is an exceedingly exacting one, both in regard to methods employed and results obtained. The most painstaking calculations may prove fallacious because of the peculiar nature of the sources which, as everyone may easily experience, refuse to give answers to important questions, and overflow with insignificant things. But while the reader may sometimes question the statements made, it is not for us, with no access to material such as M. Levasseur and his informers possess in abundance, to pass any hasty criticism. The patient student will find the author's views generally verified by the facts. At any rate, the book is worthy of the closest attention by historians and economists alike. The only trouble is that even a book of 600 closely printed pages cannot do justice, except in a general way, to the multitude of problems (of value even for our own time) which a minute study of mediæval times brings to one's attention. The life of the nations in its various forms and phrases is fast becoming a topic of absorbing interest. M. Levasseur's book is an exceedingly great help toward a more perfect understanding of this life and a solution of its problems, and it is with the purpose of bringing before the public the merits of this important contribution to historical literature that in the following we briefly review its contents.

At the beginning of the fifth century Gaul was abandoned to the Barbarian invasions. Who were these strangers? At the time of Cæsar they were still partly nomads who lived on milk and cheese and dressed in the hides of their beasts. Even a century later Tacitus

¹E. LAVASSEUR, *Histoire des classes ouvrières et de l'industrie en France avant 1789*. Tome premier, livres ii-iv. Deuxième édition. Paris: Rousseau, 1901.

found them little advanced, remaining strangers to Roman manners, arts, and institutions. Their industry was confined to the weaving and dyeing of coarse cloth, and painting their shields in bright colors, while their commerce consisted in buying from strangers such things as they needed but could not themselves make. But 400 years later, when their institutions again came under observation, associations (which may have existed in embryo when Tacitus wrote) enjoyed already an established existence. We hear of fraternities, guilds, whose members were sworn to mutual assistance and protection. The institution probably had its origin in the old custom of brotherhood established between military men, who blended blood to signify how close and interdependent was their relation. As times became less turbulent, and town life progressed, the need of mutual reliance expressed itself in brotherhoods on a broader basis, with the economic purpose more clearly defined. That Roman institutions, known as they were over the larger part of Europe, may have entirely influenced the make-up of the guild, is possible, although lately the guild has come to be looked upon as a purely Germanic institution. It is difficult to see how the guild as a mere social gathering could justify its existence, while as an industrial race the Germanic nations amounted to almost nothing until after the crusades. Be that as it may, M. Levasseur, as little as any other authority, can solve the question until some inscription or other sign from the far past helps to throw light on the origin of the guild. But that Charles the Great so vigorously condemned the guilds from fear of conspiracy appears to us to point to a danger from the rising of the subject Roman population rather than to fear of turbulence on the part of the Germans, who were agriculturists rather than artisans.

M. Levasseur thinks that the invasions left nothing but universal destruction and desolation behind them; that the hordes of Germanic warriors, being brutal and greedy, ate the land bare as would a swarm of locusts. The big cities were the ones most frequently sacked, and although the majority of the population remained Gallo-Roman in possession of their property, an economic revolution took place which utterly changed the life of the conquered provinces. The country was thrown hundreds of years back in development, and as after an inundation weeds take the place of grain, so Roman institutions were superseded by German. Having no inducement to commerce on any large scale, no center toward which its energies might be attracted, the city, the Roman *municipium*, became merged in the *pagus*, and

economy changed from commercial to rural. The Frankish villa or domainial farm, as an expression of the decentralization of political and economic energy, takes the place of the town, which was now only the seat of a fitful and rapacious government and maintained influence only through the administrative ability of the functionaries of the church. The count M. Levasseur calls a new magistrate; but if the office was new, the name is at least a very old one. The count had no interest in the town as such, no understanding of its ancient rights. His chief interest lay in the organization of successful raids, in making the bishop submit to his commands, and in extorting what wealth there remained from the unhappy inhabitants. The system of taxation so efficiently organized by the Romans, was, on the whole, appreciated and kept up under the supervision of the graf; but now that commerce had dwindled and every household restricted itself to what it produced, the system could not possibly prove as remunerative as before. It is probable that this general condition of affairs underwent no change until the first dissolution of the Frankish empire. Charles the Great, after so many generations of dismal experience, understood better the functions of government. While he cared nothing for cities, he saw at least how greatly the development of rural economy might further the national strength. Himself a great land owner, he set an example for the other great lords in the management of his estates. Building probably on methods tried and found profitable by the church, the only institution which understood and practiced economy on a large scale, he published the ordinance for all the farms belonging to his palaces which is so favorably known in mediæval history. Due to such orders and example, but probably still more to the necessity of centralization, the rural estate developed into a concern of mighty dimensions, the nucleus of future principalities from which sprang new forms of the economic life, industry, town life, and commerce.

M. Levasseur's account of industry at this early stage, as managed on the large estates of the church and of the baronage, is extremely interesting. The feudal lord in his castle or the abbey, with the houses and huts of merchants and artisans clustering against the walls and the farms distributed over the flat land, was in more cases than one the founder of a new town. Constant demand for provisions, the necessity of having the makers of new articles close at hand, made of the castle and the monastery a center of industry and of exchange, and finally under its very shelter a thriving community grew up which existed by its own efforts. Even the large cities which had survived

the time of political insecurity took a new lease on life and, protected by the large immunities granted the church or the great lord, rose once more into prominence. Stagnation was past; civilization began once more.

The laboring classes were made up of unfree, half-free and free. Concerning the unfree M. Levasseur has not much to say, and it is probably true that the number of slaves engaged in industry as in agriculture was constantly dwindling. The number of free laborers, too, was constantly decreasing, many becoming tenants and even serfs under the stress of changing economic conditions. On the other side there was the freedman, the *litus*, and the *colonus*, all half-free, with whom the country estates were populated. Every lord, lay or ecclesiastic, every town and every village, had its staff of unfree and half-free laborers who were either attached to the soil or to the owner's household. Certain large estates, such as the enormous domains of the abbey St. Germain-des-Prés in Paris, had a perfect army of laborers. For the regulation of their holdings and their contributions the marvelous *Polyptyque* of abbot Irminon was drawn up, which is for our understanding of the management of ecclesiastical property what the *De Villis* of Charles the Great is for the lay. M. Levasseur justly goes into particulars concerning the *Polyptyque*, which, although incomplete, represents the abbey as possessing 1,717 servile holdings divided between 2,859 households and inhabited by 10,282 persons of all ages, altogether an area of 42,050 acres out of a total of perhaps 172,977. And the abbey of St. Germain was by no means the richest of the monasteries within the Frankish empire. The supplies which each household was expected to furnish are minutely accounted for in the *Polyptyque*. M. Levasseur includes some general statements for illustration. Thus the 1,430 homesteads were every year to furnish: 4 horses, 55¼ oxen, 5 heifers, 1,079 sheep, 2,132 liters of wheat, 50,979 liters of spelt, 4,005 liters of oats, 572 liters of mustard, 2 wagons and 11½ wooden footboards, 105 laths, 40,978 shingles, 20,133 narrow boards, 372 staves, 186 barrel hoops, 350 horseshoes, 4,891 chickens, 25,318 eggs, etc. As for the required labor to be done for the abbey by 25 homesteads, the term *corvée* (forced labor) is too indefinite to give any clear understanding of how little or how much might be demanded in day or week work; but such as it is, there were 125 to be done each season; 300 rods to be plowed, harrowed, and sown; 75 days' week work at times when there was no forced labor; 50 long carriages and 225 rods to fence. The dues and duties were very unevenly

distributed among the different homesteads, some having much, others less work to perform, largely because of the uneven size of the holdings themselves, some being comparatively large, others apparently too small to yield anything but the scantiest sort of living. Work must have been hard, often unwillingly performed and slow; hence the overseer was to see to it that the lord received what was his right.

In the cities, however, energy was more abundant. Here the population was less mixed; here from olden time was the seat of government; here Roman law was remembered the longest; here were the large markets, the largest number of merchants and artisans; here too was the seat of the first mints with opportunity for exchange on a larger scale. We hear of crafts carried to great perfection, particularly in the line of gold and silversmith work. The guilds met here, and industry here found its natural home. Travelers came through, foreigners and the universal peddler, the Jew, with his stock of rare merchandise and ready money. The larger portion of the laboring population consisted of half-free who in these more liberal surroundings brought more initiative to the task performed. But free labor was no less common among the Gallo-Romans who engaged in trade and industry, while the Germans were soldiers or agriculturists. For the city, too, had to have its defenders and its providers. The neighboring lords, but even more the church, whose estates contributed so largely to the protection of the city, allowed their retainers to settle there, and their surplus population as well as their surplus produce found in the city a market with profit for both. From the maxim of the church that labor sanctified man (in marked contrast to both pagan and barbarian view of labor), artisans received an incentive to diligence which bore its fruit. From the monastery emanated and around it clustered a multitude of all sorts of mechanics who worked partly for themselves, partly for the convent. In the town of St. Riquier (risen on the premises of the abbey of the same name) in the ninth century the unfree population, comprising a fair quota of the total (14,000), was grouped by streets or quarters, such as the quarter of merchants, the quarter of armorers, of shoemakers, of linen weavers; each quarter paying an annual due from the produce independently of the ground tax. In order to improve the work, probably also in order to reduce expenses, the monks built canals and employed water-power for their stamping-mills and tanneries, besides their gardening. But while the monasteries as producers were the largest establishments of their kind, in their dealings with the world at large they had to employ middlemen

to buy and sell ; and here was the chance for enterprising traders to do business on a large scale. That monasteries by their incessant industry rapidly accumulated wealth was but natural. Constant watchfulness, frugality, little or no opportunity for waste, could lead to but one result. Soon the monastery owned everything that was worth owning ; every enterprise worth having was either in its possession or under its guidance ; work for its own sake or for the love of God lost attraction ; energy, like an electric spark, moved away from the religious corporation and animated once more the lay. The mercantile instinct reasserted itself in its natural surroundings, production and enterprise returned to its original channels, and the town, once destroyed by the predominance of rural economy, re-entered into its rights and flourished on the ruins of the structure which at first had seemed completely to exclude it. M. Levasseur asks whether the religious communities gained by thus being separated from the active life and devoting themselves to contemplation and studies. The manual labor seems to have been the balance needed in a life of silence, meditation, and often mental lethargy.

The communal movement was the outcome of conditions which had thus gradually improved, but which still left much to be desired in regard to security of property and personal liberty. In one way it was ushered forward by the crusades, a more direct and intimate connection with the South and the East ; but it was no less an outcome of the brighter and more hopeful prospects within, the cessation of invasions, and the gradual settling of society into more stable and lasting forms in keeping with its political and economic needs. In the twelfth century society had already so progressed that the conditions of the past, when mentioned in documents, were not understood any more. Instead of the former variety, uniformity then prevailed. All land was divided up into fiefs and freeholds, but the latter soon, for the sake of uniformity, were counted as fiefs too. Society was composed of two classes : lords and vassals, freemen and serfs. Yet, in spite of this simplification of conditions, peace did not reign, but war. Brigandage was common ; peasants and burghers had to form associations for mutual aid in order to prevent plunder. The attempt of the clergy to check the disorder by words of warning or by exacting pledges had no particular effect. Besides this open spoliation of the weaker by the stronger, there was another, more law-bound, but not the less oppressive. The customary rights of lords over their tenants had to be sanctioned by a mutual bond of sympathy in order not to be destructive in the extreme. The taxes were often assessed arbitrarily,

and the lord as a matter of course availed himself of every privilege which his territorial rights gave him to appropriate every industry, and compelling his tenants to frequent his market, grind at his mill, and otherwise give him the benefit of their preference, whereas other opportunities might have been for them both more profitable and more convenient. As consumer rather than producer, the lord found it necessary to make every claim he had on the industry of his tenants count for as much as it possibly could. That he succeeded shows the isolation and the self-centered character of feudal life, and also shows the danger which a neighboring city would be to the narrow order of the rural system. The lord, to make life more attractive on his estates, would have to reduce his demands on his serfs, or even liberate them. For if liberty was not given, it was often taken by the serf escaping to the city, where the air made him free.

This demand for liberty, combined with the strenuous efforts on the part of the lords to make their authority maintain itself permanently even in the city, caused the formation of political associations such as the commune. The history of the commune is probably better known than most other phases of mediæval life. It is the struggle for constitutionalism, self-government, and republican institutions at the time when such efforts, in the midst of an apparently firmly established feudal régime, seemed altogether premature. But now as always the cities were the places where only the ablest could succeed, and where national enterprise on a large or small scale was first started. Here impressions were most rapidly transmitted into action, and the very closeness of intercourse taught men to combine. The town, which had once been the very pulse-beat of life in the vast Roman organism, became once more the center and culmination point of energy for the huge and sluggish body of the feudal state. The commune was hated and abhorred by the lord, whether count or bishop. As his officers and retainers were excluded from the associations, his constant effort was to annul, or get his suzerain to annul, the charters which necessity had compelled him to grant. But the solidarity of resistance on the part of the burghers, and the profits accruing from being reasonable and even conciliatory toward the new movement, often conquered the lord's opposition. The commune became self-governing in all matters of importance and recognized the supremacy of the lord only in the payment of certain annual dues, to which the lord gladly consented rather than lose every vestige of former authority. M. Levasseur counts more than forty communes whose charters are preserved, situ-

ated almost without exception north of the Loire ; but the total number of free cities is much larger. That within the thus self-governing community a new struggle began between the propertied and the nonpropertied classes ; that sometimes aristocratic, sometimes democratic government prevailed, was but a further attempt to break down the exclusiveness of feudal society. But this led to nothing further than that the commune lost its stability and was gathered in under the sway of the crown. A large portion of the French cities, however, both in the north and the south, acquired a limited independence ; but in the feeling of general insecurity they remained under some lord's authority, preferably under the crown's, thus furthering their economic well-being without endangering their political existence. Hence the communal movement in its climax was only short-lived, but in the impetus given and the results for the working classes, for the wealth and the intellectual progress of the nation, it was of lasting importance.

These pages form an introduction, as it were, to the chief object of interest in M. Levasseur's treatment of mediæval labor : the history of the guilds, or corporations, as they ought rather to be called. The emancipation of the communes goes back in its origin to the end of the eleventh century. The necessity of protecting their interests politically brought about the larger association from which the independent city took the name ; the necessity of securing to the artisans the use of their property and the exercise of their profession caused whatever loose economic organization had existed before to combine more closely. What was needed was to put each profession on a firm basis of rule and supervision ; to protect the individual, and through him the trade of the city, from the effect of fraud, competition, and undue influence from quarters which had neither the welfare of the citizen nor the success of the city at heart. These corporations held, and in order to be successful had to hold, a monopoly of the trade, or the branch of the trade, which they represented. M. Levasseur makes a point of describing the earliest corporations and tracing their motives in combining and the advantages derived therefrom. Based on unfree labor, they probably owed their growth and their struggle for eminence to free initiative. From the beginning the corporation is the very nerve and pulse of the city ; but only in the twelfth century has it fully developed its hierarchy of apprentice, valet, and master, and become conscious of its purely industrial purpose, eager for privileges with

which to combat rivaling trade. Naturally the larger cities, such as Paris, are the ones in which the development of corporations is first noticeable and where the heads of these concerns first exercise political influence. As nowadays tradesmen and manufacturers call attention to themselves by advertisements, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the corporations were in possession of their freshest energy; one of the privileges most eagerly sought and most proudly cherished was the right to partake in the yearly processions of the church, to donate altars and painted windows, and maintain service in properly adorned chapels, or to erect edifices of costly character as a monument of their wealth and devoted spirit. Hence it is that these corporations set their mark in more than one way in the history of the municipality and the nation. The very monopoly upon a profession demanded that a strict supervision be exercised so as to turn out only the best kind of work; but the anxiety with which the workmanship is watched suggests also but a limited range of production as well as of consumption. If anyone asks why M. Levasseur has not among his rather well-assorted statistical material included some pertinent information as to the import and export, as well as the general output, of any one corporation, it is because in most cases no such information is to be had. The sources record nothing of that kind, and, besides, in most cases the city was sufficient only unto itself. The city was its own chief consumer. Hence this lack in M. Levasseur's excellent work, most keenly felt, is most easily accounted for.

What M. Levasseur tells us about the rules governing membership within the corporation, if not new, is not without interest. The three orders—master, valet, and apprentice—covered corresponding degrees of efficiency, and accordingly of importance, within the association. Lowest in the ranks was the apprentice, who was but an aspirant to future honors, and even so was but sparingly admitted to the opportunity. A master could have only a limited number of apprentices in order to avoid overcrowding of the profession, and also in order to insure personal instruction to everyone. The master's son paid nothing for learning the trade, but the stranger did. Whether at this time the change from apprentice to valet was a matter of years only, or whether it was a case of showing ability, is difficult to say. The time set for completing the apprenticeship was, according to the trade, from three to eight, ten, and even twelve years; and besides the master could expect a payment of from 20 to 100 sous (25 to 125 fr.), the sum diminishing with the number of years. The length of time seems

reasonable when a difficult trade was to be learned and the material to be handled was expensive, as in the case of a jeweler; but it seems out of all proportion in a number of other trades. But the long apprenticeship was an outcome of the tendency to restrict energy and make the crafts absorb all the intellect there was. And it was but natural that an artisan would be content with serving as an apprentice for a lengthened period rather than to have no access to the crafts and hence to a livelihood. According to the contract, confirmed by oath and to be followed to the letter, the apprentice was to obey implicitly his master and never testify against him. If he left his master before the time, he was to be searched for and brought back in a fashion which forcibly recalls the serfdom from which the crafts had risen. After the third escape he ceased to be a part of the corporation, and no master could employ him. Certain trades forbade the runaway to remain in town unless he fulfilled his previous obligations. The master could even sell him, as if he were a serf. But if he sold him or ceded him to another, he could not take another apprentice until the appointed time was past. The apprentice did the hard work, washed and cooked for the family as well as for the valets. The master on his side was to lodge, board, and clothe his apprentice. If refractory, the master could punish him, which privilege led to gross abuse. The apprentice might only too often become the victim of avarice and brutality, and hence even in the opinion of the statutes there might be excuse for his running away. In such case he was allowed to lease himself to another master.

The next stage was that of workman, valet, or journeyman, as he was afterward called. If the valet came from outside, he had to show his credentials for having served his apprenticeship. Often he was asked to give proof of his ability before being engaged. Thus the pastry-makers forbade engaging a valet who could not make a thousand little cakes in a day. Valets who wished to be hired assembled at dawn at some open square or cross-road and waited for the masters to come. The master must take care that the valet was not merely a disguised apprentice, that he had enough clothes to appear presentable and not by his slovenliness scare noble purchasers away. A master could have as many valets as his business demanded; some were engaged for the day, others for the week, others for a year. The valet, too, was under contract and served for wages. He was to begin work at dawn and to stay till sundown. Hence the working day was sixteen hours in summer and eight in winter. If night work was demanded he could not refuse in consideration of an increase in wages.

M. Levasseur thinks it doubtful whether in a city like Paris there were more workmen than masters. In fact, many masters worked outside, as if they were mere journeymen. There was often anything but harmony between the masters and their valets. Higher wages were demanded, and the authorities had cause for complaint in the riotous proceedings of valets—proceedings in which sometimes the masters joined when wishing to protest against taxes injurious to their trade. The system of restrictions to industry, however natural at first, by degrees became hurtful and caused turbulent scenes wherever enterprise was most vigorous or chances for improvement were best.

The master was often enjoined not to employ any workman who had not sworn fealty to the corporation. On the other hand, to become master was a matter not only of having learned the trade, but of having also the necessary means with which to pay the expected dues to the lord in case the trade was not free and the town was not a commune, to the corporation as admission fee, and to each member as a treat. Even so a master was often not admitted until a year had elapsed, during which he had proved his competency. Once admitted, he could not be deprived of his rights (except for grave misdemeanor and upon the judgment of his peers), and his rights were transferred to his widow, who might continue her husband's trade even after marrying a second time and marrying a man who was a stranger to the trade.

The rules issued in regard to quantity and quality, weight, measure, and manner of production had but the general good in view and expressed the desire to secure the best products, and hence a permanent hold on trade. In the first place, everything must be done in broad daylight and in the front part of the shop, so as to be open to inspection by the passers-by. Hence the objection to night work, which also had its dangers in a densely built town. To see that these rules were carried out, inspectors made sudden visits to the workshops or were asked by the manufacturer to test his work. In case of woven goods the inspectors applied the iron rule to see that the width was as prescribed. Whatever was below standard was seized and confiscated, and the defaulter paid a fine. The latter was not very high, but worse than the fine was the probable loss of credit and the possible loss of profession. If wares were good, they were marked; and each artisan, each corporation and city, had a special seal. With the limited resources at hand, it seems almost impossible for anyone to gain more than the most paltry advantage from falsification; but the rules were evidently imperfectly observed, and fraud was frequent. Credulity

was the chief weakness of the age, and buyers were constantly imposed on. Hence old ordinances and statutes were superseded by new and more stringent ones. But the chief motor in it all was the secret fear of competition from within and without. An artisan was often forbidden to finish elsewhere what he had begun at home. On the other side, it is often difficult to determine the limits of one trade as distinct from another. As a result there was constant friction between related professions, as M. Levasseur illustrates profusely, and the courts were kept busy deciding upon differences. Duplication of a trade was strenuously resisted; as, *e. g.*, when in the thirteenth century the Templars in Paris asked to have a butcher's shop of their own—which request, by the way, was granted—the guild of butchers remonstrated and finally acquired the supervision, as if the new establishment were but a branch store. The powerful organization just mentioned was governed by a master-butcher, elected for life. If he died, a council of four carried on the business until the end of the month. Then the members came together and appointed twelve electors, who chose the new master. The master judged in all matters concerning the profession. Appeals from him went directly to the *prevôt*. He had one-third of all fines as his emolument, and one of the three keys to the corporation's strong box containing the seal and the charters was in his hands; the other two were in the possession of the *prevôt* and the council respectively. The council had the management of funds, and gave every year an account as they quitted their charge. Three times a week the master and the council, under the presidency of the royal judge, sat in judgment upon all differences arising within the corporation. Besides these four assessors (as they might be called), there were three flayers who acted as secretaries or ushers. New members were initiated with much ceremony, and a feast was given in their honor, or rather given by them in honor of the corporation. Still M. Levasseur does not wish us to think that every artisan or every tradesman was enrolled in a corporation. In the country plenty of artisans, free and unfree, manufactured and sold, and exercised all necessary prerogatives under the general supervision of the law. Many were agriculturists and artisans at the same time. Even in the cities there were many branches of industry which lacked corporative organization, and in the thirteenth century there were still cities which had no guilds whatever. But the tendency of the age was toward consolidation of interests, and the corporative movement became more universal as the centuries progressed.

One large corporation remains to be considered, the Parisian Hansa — an association to which was given the monopoly of navigation on the Seine, at least as far as Nantes, and which deals particularly in the wines of Burgundy. No boat could pass this stretch without the corporation's permission; and the trade between two of the richest provinces in France, Normandy and Burgundy, was thus in its hands. The Hansa within its field was almost sovereign; it could treat with the neighboring lords as with an equal, levy imposts on boats carrying loads to and from Paris. Besides this the king, in consideration of a yearly tribute, granted it the right to supervise weight and measure within the town — a privilege which the Hansa gradually extended to the domain of other lords as well, thus coming to have the position almost of crown officials. The corporation was governed by four aldermen and a *prevôt*, called the master of merchants. From this board of administrators rose later the municipal council of the city. Soon the Hansa intervened in municipal affairs. In the thirteenth century it imposed a tax on the inhabitants for maintaining the pavement, and otherwise had its say in regard to the construction of bridges, and building of baths. By degrees the administration of the city under the presidency of the king's *prevôt* came into its hands, and the seal of Paris is almost identical with the seal of the corporation. There were other Hansas to which other parts of the navigation of the Seine was given, such as the one at Rouen; but in the struggle between the two the Parisian Hansa got the lion's share of the king's favor, largely because of the uncertain temper of the people of Normandy and the king's interest in the loyalty of the capital.

In order to understand the difficulties under which mediæval trade labored and which crippled its efforts, it is worth while studying the subject of taxation. The latter divides itself into taxes on persons and taxes on goods. No city, not even the commune, was entirely free from either; in fact, it must be supposed that in a certain sense taxation was more exorbitant in the self-governing city than elsewhere, inasmuch as its expenses were increased by the necessity of maintaining a more efficient militia and a more complete administration. Among the personal taxes the inevitable *taille*, which is often ground tax, poll-tax, and tax on movables combined, comes first. As a rule, all men were without exception subject to this tax. In case of the commune the burghers were sometimes relieved, but often the tax was levied in a lump sum by means of direct and indirect imposts. Besides the *taille*, which was looked upon as an inevitable evil, during the crusades

the townpeople had to give one-tenth of their property for fitting out the king, or aid was asked from each burgher according to his means. The frequent distress of the royal treasury caused demands for extraordinary contributions (such as a *denar* [0.36 fr.] per pound of sales), which weighed heavily on both property and labor. Large cities bought themselves free by a large sum once for all, but not every city could afford this show of wealth. The assessment of taxes seems to have been by sections or parishes; the sum raised in one year is estimated at more than 75 million francs. Another tax was the yearly payment with which a merchant or artisan bought himself free from service which in earlier times belonged to his profession and which in default of money the lord's bailiff or the king's *prevôt* might impose anew. But even with these larger contributions, smaller dues remained which were relics of old custom, and were insisted on whenever it was convenient or imperative to raise money. More galling and disturbing even than the personal taxes was the taxation of goods. Circulation was vitally hampered by the numerous imposts on transportation and sales. The entrance to a town was gained only upon payment of duty according to value and quantity of goods. Only one's personal belongings were exempt, or what was bought in Saturday's market. In Paris there was a small export tax on wine bought in the city. Pike money was levied on all carts or horses passing over the road. Sometimes the regulations asked for other things than money. The juggler should sing a song, the mountebank make his monkey dance, and the like. Everyone would have to give something to be let out or admitted. Where the right of way was divided between different lords, commerce was subject to serious dangers. Each toll collector would arrest the transport and demand his due without regard to circumstances, and the merchant would see his goods disappear or spoil before he could reach his destination. Often the merchant was compelled to take the longest route rather than the more direct, in order that the toll collector might conveniently make his collection. The result of such vexation and delay was that merchants banded together and offered a fixed sum in money rather than payment in kind. Imposts on sales were exacted in the vender's shop and interfered particularly with the sale of agricultural products. In Paris booths were erected by the king in a convenient place for the sale of fish and other necessities, and often the merchants were obliged to close their shops on Saturdays and move their wares to the booths, for the use of which the king naturally asked a compensation. The right of fair was an uncom-

monly profitable one for whomsoever possessed it, king, lord, or commune, a rent being asked from every vender of marketable products. Mills, ovens, furnaces, and other public conveniences within the city were also as a rule in the possession of someone who could compel the burghers to use them for his benefit. Probably the danger of fire justified the maintenance of but one or two ovens within a city, but finally each burgher was permitted to have an oven of his own. The exclusive right of some lord to the measure and weight employed also hampered commerce. All sales had to be performed either in his presence or in the presence of his agent. The delay, trouble, and petty annoyance caused can more easily be imagined than told. Some lords were still able to enforce the old right to postpone all sales of grain and wine until their own crop was profitably disposed of; also the right to be lodged and boarded whenever it was their pleasure to visit the town. But heaviest of all to the burgher was the duty to serve the lord in war forty days at his own expense. Many corporations succeeded in throwing off the burden; others remained too closely allied to the lord's interests to buy themselves free. Their larger dependence brought them some advantage in making them sole providers of food, clothing, and furniture to a bishop's or count's numerous household.

The question of coinage, which is an exceedingly important one in mediæval history, M. Levasseur treats fully. Coinage, which had been a royal prerogative under the Carolingians, became a seignorial right under feudalism. The names "pound," "sou," and "denar" continued to be used, but in course of time the pound weighed became wholly different from the pound coined. Charles the Great had introduced the silver standard instead of the Roman gold standard, and had decreed that a pound silver should contain 20 sous. As the lords usurped the right of coinage, the quantity of silver was reduced so as to increase their profits. The kings did as the lords, and where royal power grew royal coinage drove the seignorial out of circulation. At the end of the eleventh century royal money tallied no longer with the Carolingian pound, but with the mark, which weighed but half a pound, and the coined pound lost all relation to the weighed. The denar, which was originally a silver coin, now contained more copper than silver; and the pound, which once was equivalent to 240 denars (86.40 fr.), had silver enough to be worth only 27 fr., and later even only 21-18 fr. New coins, a gold piece and a silver coin (the big *tournois*), with a couple of smaller coins came into circulation and

increased the confusion. St. Louis, who had learned at least one thing from his contact with eastern civilization, wrought a change. Henceforth the mark was worth 58 tournois, and the latter became the principal coin. One pound tournois henceforth contained twenty of these coins. The gold piece just mentioned was worth about one half of a pound silver, the difference between the two metals being 10 : 1, or according to others 12 : 1. The good money of King Louis was established in March, 1262, and the king struck a deadly blow at seignorial coinage by decreeing that his money should be legal tender everywhere, while the seignorial coins were good only as far as the lord's jurisdiction extended. The money of St. Louis remained intact for some thirty years, until Philip the Fair in his anxiety for revenue began to tamper with it. He decreed a higher nominal value to some coins than by right of weight and grain they should have, and reduced the weight of others without lowering their worth, until the legal value of the gold coin was doubled as compared with its real and the value of silver coins had really fallen by half. The clamor for good money was so great that the king had to submit, but, instead of withdrawing the debased money, he let it circulate side by side with the good, creating endless trouble, especially in dealings where the debtor insisted on offering debased money on the strength of the king's command that his currency be accepted as legal. That commerce was not more profoundly disturbed was probably due to the fact that coins, being without indication of value, were, according to old practice, weighed rather than counted, and in buying and selling the public became accustomed to receive and make payment only with scales and touchstone close at hand. But even so much embarrassment and injustice was the result of this fraudulent policy.

No doubt the most difficult point to settle is the question of prices. M. Levasseur's statements, based largely on the researches of M. d'Avenel, suggest that the commodities, such as food, as compared with the wages paid were less dear than now, while manufactured articles, such as clothing, naturally came very high. Of highest interest is the table wherein M. d'Avenel has attempted to show how the average price of wheat and rye from 1201 to 1890, as counted by periods of twenty-five years, has almost steadily risen to five and six times its former cost (wheat from 1.80 to 20 fr. and rye from 1.90 to 12 fr.). Another price list, quoting prices and revenue of land from 1200 to 1400, shows, on the other side, a steady reduction, largely because of war. In still another price list, showing variation of food prices dur-

ing twenty-five, years the century or part of it to which the twenty-five years belong is not given, which essentially diminishes the value of the quotation.¹ But such as it is we reproduce it here :

1201-1225 or 1301-1325?

Peas and beans per hectoliter (gall. 26.4)	-	-	fr.	4.52-11.42
Price of ox, per head	-	-	-	20.00-52.00
Price of sheep, per head	-	-	-	3.00- 4.50
Price of pig, per head	-	-	-	6.00-12.00
Price of wine, per hectoliter	-	-	-	5.12-25.56
Price of chicken, apiece	-	-	-	0.32- 0.50
Price of goose	-	-	-	0.54- 0.74
Price of rabbit	-	-	-	0.71- 1.67
Price of carp	-	-	-	0.80- 1.30
Price of eggs, per dozen	-	-	-	0.11- 0.12
Price of butter, per kilogram (2.2 pounds)	-	-	-	0.43- 0.65

M. Levasseur takes considerable pleasure in giving us an idea of the mediæval city during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. No bulletins or placards informed the public of where and what things were for sale, but instead were the signs and sign boards, each of which tried to be as telling as possible. And where the merchant found these not expressive enough he employed criers, who advertised his wares from sunrise to sundown. What wares he did not thus dispose of, he sent his valet out to sell on the street. The thoroughfares were full of boys and women selling vegetables, fruit, and cheese. In Paris the fruit sellers had their chief stand on the left border of the Seine, and from their stores the poor student eked out his meager meal. On every corner were pastry sellers who offered muffins and waffles to be eaten on the spot. Of course, only the small trader, the plebeian among the merchants, indulged in this traffic. The greater number of dealers had their shops and stayed there. Dealers in the same article usually drew together and occupied whole streets and quarters of their own. Often the goods were piled high outside, thus obstructing the passage in the narrow and crowded streets. The houses were high but narrow, with scarcely more than three windows to the front, and overlapping upper stories, huddled together, often so completely shutting out air and light from the street that the sun never reached the bottom of the dark and damp thoroughfare. But the half-light which perpetually reigned was not altogether displeasing to the trades-

¹ In the price lists, as taken from M. d'Avenel, it is often difficult to say what the author intends to be the standard of value, the pound (mediæval) or the franc (modern).

man, who had his little shop even more obscured by blinds or remnants for sale. The darkness helped to hide the inferiority of his goods. If to this be added the lack of pavement, the gutter running through the middle, people, pigs, and cattle thronging the narrow passage where a horseman could scarcely turn, one has a picturesque idea of the confusion of a mediæval town, not unlike the scenes near the bazars in Constantinople.

The importance of commerce in more than one way dawned on the king and most of the great barons, and they took pains to protect merchants on the road. The king's officers and vassals had strict command to defend travelers, and were held responsible if on the king's territory such were insulted or abused. But, in spite of this precaution, the traveler who was bold enough to pass the night in the open, instead of where he ought to be, within the walls of a city, was indeed looked upon as having invited his own disaster. The cities on their part tried to strengthen commerce and the confidence of merchants by giving creditors extensive privileges for recovering debts. In some provinces the creditor could send people to the debtor's house to remain there until he became submissive. In some cities people from another city, or even country, were considered responsible for debts incurred by their compatriots. Thus a citizen from Bordeaux might easily be thrown in prison and deprived of all he had in order that the claims of a creditor on some other citizen, with which perchance the last comer had no connection, might be satisfied. This precaution naturally would prevent rather than encourage intercourse between distant cities and countries, but it was the outcome of the necessity for self-protection in the absence of commercial treaties or a strong central government. Such seizures would most likely take place at the great fairs, where people from far and near met. M. Levasseur discusses these fairs at some length. The fairs of Paris and of the south, which first attracted commerce on a large scale, were in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries superseded by the great fairs of Flanders and of Champagne. To these assembled not merely merchants from half of Europe, but dealers in goods from India, Alexandria, Damascus, Venice, Spain, and the Levant, transported over the old trade routes and by the ships of the German Hansa. Money was borrowed and exchanged at exorbitant interest, but stringent laws protected the unsuspecting trader from being defrauded. The courts of Champagne prided themselves on giving every liberty to commerce, but also on keeping a most efficient guard over everyone's rights.

The chain of fairs stretched from the English Channel to the Mediterranean. But the selfish policy of Philip the Fair severed the link which bound the fairs of the east of France to those of the north. His wars with Flanders broke the connection with the sea route of the north; Germans and Italians abandoned the route along the Rhone and Saone, and sought the English channel instead; and the fairs as international meeting-places sank into oblivion; what trade was left was of entirely local character. Not fully fifty years served to bring about this complete change.

The brisk trade naturally led to the establishment of banking-houses with facilities for large loans on interest, such as had not been known before. The church forbade taking interest, but the demands of the trade and the risks incurred led to frequent violation of these rules. The kings confined themselves to prescribing the maximum of interest, and even this was enough to be honored with the name usury. Forty-three per cent. under Philip Augustus was reduced to 20 per cent. under Philip the Fair, showing the scarcity of money; and at the fairs of Champagne both 30 and 15 per cent. per year were demanded, to be paid in weekly instalments whenever practicable. The unclean trade of lending money was pursued not only by the Jews, but by the Italian bankers, and the religious orders lent money quite openly, particularly the Templars, whose fortress-like convents served as safety vaults for the treasures of even the crown. The narrow policy of Philip the Fair in destroying the Templars, persecuting the Lombards, and driving the Jews out of the kingdom fatally injured the money trade.

The *taille*, as paid by artisans in Paris toward the end of the thirteenth century, averaged from 1 pound to 12 *denar* silver, or 15-1 francs. The question how taxation compared with wages earned M. Levasseur finds almost impossible to answer, because of the scarcity of information offered by the documents and also because of the difficulty of establishing even approximately the purchasing power of money in circulation. Although one gram (fifteen grains) of silver would buy probably four and one-half times as much food as today, or be considered four times as high wages as nowadays, it would certainly buy less of other products, such as iron, steel, or clothing. Besides wages varied according to place, occupation, and the position of the workman. While a master carpenter might get an equivalent of 2.67 fr. a day, an apprentice received only 0.63 fr.; and a master in Paris naturally received four times as much as an apprentice in Artois. M.

Levasseur ventures the hypothesis that the average wage of a workman toward the end of the thirteenth century was about 1 fr. a day, and the wages of an apprentice only one-third of this, the day laborer in the country receiving still less. With this income the artisan is supposed to have been able to buy nine quarts of grain and four pounds of meat, which is more than he could purchase with the same money nowadays; while for the same wages he could buy more necessities of another kind now than he could at that time. Moreover, the large number of holidays (more than one hundred in the year) interfered with his earnings, and the increase in price of grain must have caused considerable distress, which, with the proverbial lack of providence among the working classes, brought its natural result in crime.

While the previous centuries had on the whole been prosperous times for the cities, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were full of hardships, increase of taxes, and systematic attack on their privileges by the new dynasty. The Capetians had made common cause with the burghers against the baronage. The house of Valois reversed this policy and, seeking its chief support in the nobles, tried to diminish the power of the towns. The ostensible excuse for this was the constant emptiness of the treasury. Philip the Fair had created a royal administration. In order to make it work, money was needed and, since nothing was to be gotten from the nobility, the trades alone would have to furnish the funds.

The new taxes were collected from sales and, with the tax on chimneys and the salt tax, constituted a regular source of income never to be quite abandoned. The royal collectors, however, in the general disorder were imperfectly supervised, and enriched themselves instead of the crown. Philip of Valois and his son tampered with the money, determined arbitrarily the price of goods and height of wages, and abolished loans on interest, interfering thus with the conditions of trade to satisfy the higher classes. The ordinance of 1351 tried to do away with the monopoly of corporations by allowing masters and workmen of all professions to take as many apprentices as they wished and each apprentice to set up for himself after only two years apprenticeship. But even royal determination could not change economic conditions, and other ordinances showed the powerlessness of royalty to interfere in matters of wages. The rest of the history of France during the One Hundred Years' War is but a sorry motley of blunders and exactions, pillage of the treasury, carnage, and pestilence. The

Estates General tried to protest, but the necessities of war made the king win in the end. The sieges, the marching and pauses of armies, the civil disorders, and the ravages of famine and pestilence, even more than the battles must have caused a high average of mortality. As Froissart coolly puts it: one-third of the people died. The immediate result was reduction in price of land. One author has counted the drop in value of one hectare field land in Normandy to have been from 364 fr. during the first twenty-five years of the fourteenth century to 53 fr. in 1451-75; while in Burgundy, which had been spared the terrors of warfare, the price was still 99 fr. As for commerce, strangers had almost ceased to visit the country. Paris, which was supposed to have had 200,000 inhabitants, had at the restoration of peace 24,000 houses standing empty. In the country the desolation was even greater; boroughs which had had eighty chimneys had only thirty. On the seignorial estates three or four domains were often made one because there was no one left to cultivate them.

With the return of peace energy returned. The king established a standing army. Merchants again crossed the country in safety. The people had to pay for this bringing order out of confusion, but at least their paying brought benefit to themselves. In the cities the corporations resumed their old importance and authority. Statute upon statute confirmed their privileges, granted immunities and freedom from tolls. Charles VII was particularly anxious to revive the fairs, and to this end signed treaties with foreign powers. Louis XI introduced silk manufacturing and further encouraged commerce. But even so, in 1484, after so many years of peaceful industry, the Estates General raised their voice in bitter complaint against the constant increase of taxation and drew a fearful picture of the desolation of the country where the war had raged. And there is no doubt that, with all encouragement given the trades, the burden of taxes grew heavier, and that instead of the periodical plunderings reverted to before had come a systematic draining of the chief channels of wealth such as only a people with the elastic spirit of the French could bear without desperation.

Under royal protection and administration the corporations underwent many changes so as to conform to the king's idea of order and good government. The commune had made itself odious in his eyes and was everywhere suppressed, but the burghers were in most cases allowed civil liberty and even the semblance of political rights. The corporations were multiplied and stricter rules applied, on the supposi-

tion that frauds were too frequent. The condition of the apprentices was much the same as before, but on the one who wished to become master the law imposed long and costly labor in order that he might have a satisfactory piece of skilful workmanship to show for his training. The work completed and the masterpiece produced, the jury passed on its merits and issued a certificate of approval, without which no workman could open a shop of his own. The masterpiece remained the property of the corporation; if the artisan wished to keep it himself, he had to buy it back for hard cash.

From olden time, and as a continuation of the guild in its purely social aspect, another form of association existed—the fraternity, which was destined to play a great part in future municipal life. The fraternity comprised the members of one or more corporations, was placed under the protection of some saint, and was intended for mutual assistance. After the war it grew in importance, and appealed to the man and the Christian, whereas the corporation appealed to the craftsman and the citizen. The fraternity was concerned with the happiness of its members, implored aid in time of distress, and tried to make one family of them all—an object it achieved but imperfectly. It also did certain pious deeds, such as reciting prayers, and, what was more to the point, helping hospitals and charitable institutions do their work. Thus bread and clothing were distributed to beggars and beds paid for in the sick wards. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were times of much display of wealth, but also of much misery. The fraternities tried to do justice to both sides of municipal life. The paraphernalia employed in divine service were of the costliest; banners and feasts and processions on holidays took time and demanded money. At the same time the close relation of members hardly let distress go unnoticed. Poor and old members were often given the wages of a whole day for their maintenance. Members when entering contributed a fixed sum, strangers coming to town were asked to give their share, and even the dead were not exempt, a portion of the estate being set aside for this purpose. Fines were multiplied. Failure to appear without good excuse at a procession, wedding, or other occasion caused a fine to be imposed, as well as working on holidays or overtime. The budget of one of these fraternities for the year 1750 shows receipts for more than a million francs. Hence the fraternity was one of the most important institutions of the city.

While the fraternity represented the aristocratic side of mediæval industrial life, the union of masters rather than the union of workmen

pure and simple, the *compagnonage* or partnership, as it was called, presented the more universal and democratic. While the fraternity hardly went beyond the walls of the city, the labor unions of that time comprised workmen everywhere, and even went abroad to welcome the journeyman in a strange country. The valet, who now also bore the name *comrade* or companion, lived more apart from his master than before. He still worked side by side with him, and often lodged and boarded in his house, but their associations were not the same. The workman might have to occupy his inferior position for years; as a member of a fraternity he scarcely had any showing, being neither well-off nor independent. Hence it is not strange that with his particular interests he sought to create for himself relations of a different kind. When satisfied that in one place he had learned what he wanted, he became a journeyman in earnest and enlarged his knowledge somewhere else. The greater a necessity travel was, the more valuable it was to have friends somewhere else; and a secret brotherhood came into existence which comprised a large area and was very far from exclusive. The initiation into the brotherhood was quaint and with an attempt at solemnity. The members had their "mother"—the tavern where they assembled—and here a special room was theirs in which each piece of furniture had a symbolic meaning. After being pledged to secrecy, the new comer was given a new name, which he bore as member of the association only. When he left town he was accompanied by his comrades to the first cross-road, where a glass was broken in memory of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, and the traveler bade farewell to his friends in the following words: "Comrades, I take leave of you, as the apostles took leave of the Lord, when he sent them to preach the gospel; give me your blessing and I will give you mine"

Each trade had its mysteries. The church, which saw a parody on her usages in these ceremonies, condemned the trade unions, but without effect; the necessity was too great. They were in truth associations for mutual assistance, not less useful than the fraternity. A journeyman arriving in a strange place, instead of being a victim of isolation and danger, met friends and protectors. The union threw down all barriers before him, and he met help where before he would have met resistance. All members lent him their arm, purse, and advice, and divided the work in brotherly fashion between themselves and him. His first resort was the tavern, the "mother," where, as soon as he had made himself known by some mysterious sign, he was

received as an old acquaintance and had a right to share in warmth, bed, and board. It made small difference if he was without money; he was housed until he found work; money was lent him if he needed it, and if he was ill he was taken care of. The "mother" lost nothing; as soon as the newcomer found work the advance was returned. Work was not wanting, but if no other way would do, the rule was insisted on that the earliest comer should cede his place to the latest. Everyone should make a tour of France sometime and work in the principal cities. Often two went together for mutual help and pleasure. When arriving at a new place the one just visited was discussed, the places where work was plenty were mentioned; and how fast news traveled is best seen in the fact that no sooner was a great enterprise decided upon in a city than the workmen came flocking from everywhere. But cities were also often tabooed in this way; if work was bad or masters exacting, or a sufficient number of workers already employed, this news soon spread abroad.

The secret associations also had their drawbacks, however. The secrecy was made too much of; the meetings led to debauchery; riots and violence were sometimes the outcome of reunions; while the constant expense and the burdening of provident members for the benefit of the slovenly and improvident, became nuisances. Besides, the trade union was exclusive of others and jealous, trying to unite all under its sway and exercising a tyrannical pressure on those who refused to join. Members of one society entertained ill feeling toward the members of another, and associations such as the fraternity and the trade union could not exist without quarrels and open fights. The result was that the *compagnonage* forbade its members to work for the masters, who on their side appealed to the authorities to interfere.

Still another association of even more international character remains to be recorded. It consisted of traveling merchants or peddlers, who for mutual assistance formed a brotherhood, with an officer at the head called the "king of peddlers." There was such a king in Paris for the north of France, another in Languedoc for the south. These kings issued letters which served as passports, and gave the bearer the freedom of every market in Europe. The king had the superior management of the commerce of his province. At market days no salesman could open a bale of goods until the king had visited his booth. The king had his court of jurisdiction, where matters pertaining to commerce were judged. If a peddler on the journey was despoiled, and brought complaint to his king, he was

almost sure of prompt redress. This association was composed of rich peddlers, who called themselves knights, and delighted in displaying their power and wealth. It demanded heavy contributions from its members, and was not seldom guilty of oppression; hence it ceased to wield any influence as soon as the general government was strong enough to undertake effectively to maintain law and order.

One of the sources of communal liberty, as well as of constant inconvenience, was the conflict between rivaling powers in regard to jurisdiction over the city. Many claimed the right of prosecution and judgment: the episcopacy, the king's and the lord's bailiff respectively, the chapter, the monastery; last, but not least, the city council itself. Each and all demanded the right of inspection of trade, and the agreement, sometimes effected, that all join without prejudice, simply made matters worse. Finally the king, as the strongest, usurped the whole authority, largely on the plea of having a more general and less selfish interest in the welfare of all his subjects. Particularly in regard to police and sanitation, his administration proved a distinct improvement. The tramping of narrow thoroughfares by droves of pigs, the negligence of butchers in making their slaughter-pens a hot-house of pestilential smells and infection, the destruction of garbage, and the paving of streets were the subjects of repeated ordinances.

The attempt on the part of the Valois to reduce money and determine prices has already been referred to. The first Valois especially thought they could do with the coinage what they pleased. During 1337-42 the value of the pound silver sank from 17.37 to 3.37 fr., and in gold the change was equally great (19.38 to 4.72 fr.). New money was coined having a nominal value far beyond its actual, and the foreign merchants accordingly ceased to trade, while the French, ruined by these alterations, went elsewhere. Even Charles V. knew no better, and in 1360 the pound silver was worth only 0.41 fr. As a result, every commodity rose to an impossible height, and the common people had to starve. Even the king finally saw the folly of this, and the impossibility of continuing. During the reign of John the value of a mark silver had changed eighty-six times and the mark gold eighteen times, and people's ideas about values became wholly confused. The law of a maximum price was especially brought to bear on bread. Naturally, since bread was the staple of life, its price and quality was more than a matter of mere money. Today the governments of Europe try to establish an even weight of bread; in the fourteenth century weight might change, but price should not,

thus inflicting hardships on the bakers without helping the populace. During the Hundred Years' War famines made prices soar, and made it impossible for the government to maintain its regulations. At other times the harvests were good, but the general condition was such that only locally could the king enforce his will. The prices, as quoted by M. Levasseur, help a little in estimating the value of grain and the cheapness of bread. In 1351-75, he assures us, a hectoliter cost 9 fr., while one hundred years later it cost only 3.75 fr. The greater portion of merchandise followed the same rule. But with debased money, which means scarcely any money, how did the common people in the large cities, let alone the country population, obtain their daily bread?

The fifteenth century witnessed a great increase in the general activity and wealth of the cities. M. Levasseur quotes rather surprising figures in regard to the average income of the well-to-do tradesmen. The habitual idea of a mediæval city as the home of squalor and poverty is forcibly refuted when M. Levasseur calculates how the wealthy citizen, the "knight of the nation of Rheims," had a yearly income of 48,000 fr. Drapers, furriers, and spice dealers got from their trade 6,000 to 9,000 fr. a year. A rich butcher with three stalls had a weekly sale of 1,600 fr. or more, and the total of his property amounted to 96,000 fr., if not more, since M. Levasseur thinks the social power of money then was much greater than now. Hence artisans in ordinary circumstances enjoyed the possession of some means, and could marry their sons and daughters profitably. Life was simple, demands were not great, and the well-known thriftiness of the French was probably not less even then. The humbler workmen received their board; hence their wages, even if small, were extra. The country laborer received 0.45 fr. a day if boarded, and 0.90 fr. if not. The list of wages covering 200 years is very interesting. It shows, if anything, a remarkable stability in wages throughout.

In spite of increasing wealth, the number of beggars was fearful. Kings and cities tried to prevent vagabondage, and nourished the sick and feeble. Poor strangers were refused entrance. Many refused to work because of too long idleness. To start these in again, shops were erected and material bought, but the attempt stranded, and beggary remained for a long time the sad memory of the past war. France was waiting for new impulses, such as came to her from the Italian expeditions.

A. M. WERGELAND.